

Amendments

In the Claims:

1. (currently amended): A pigment-containing substance for inclusion as a feed additive produced by the method comprising:
culturing a microbe capable of producing carotenoid compounds;
centrifuging or filtering the microbial cells to remove the culture medium;
and
drying the cells so that at least 3% by mass of the dried microbial cells is carotenoid compounds ~~additives comprising a microorganism culture precipitate which contains at least 3 mass % carotenoid compounds prepared by a process of concentration by centrifugation or filtration and drying, with leaving the cell membrane and cell wall intact.~~
2. (previously amended): The pigment-containing cellular substance for feed additives according to claim 1, wherein at least 40 mass % of the carotenoid compounds is astaxanthin.
3. (previously amended): The pigment-containing cellular substance for feed additives according to claim 1, wherein a DNA nucleotide sequence corresponding to 16S ribosomal RNA of the microorganism in the microorganism culture precipitate has at least 98% homology with the nucleotide sequence as shown in SEQ ID NO:1.
4. (previously amended): The pigment-containing cellular substance for feed additives according to claim 3, wherein the microorganism in the microorganism culture precipitate is E-396 strain or a mutant thereof.
5. (previously amended): The pigment-containing cellular substance for feed additives according to claim 2, wherein a DNA nucleotide sequence corresponding to

16S ribosomal RNA of the microorganism in the microorganism culture precipitate has at least 98% homology with the nucleotide sequence as shown in SEQ ID NO:1.

6. (previously amended): The pigment-containing cellular substance for feed additives according to claim 5, wherein the microorganism in the microorganism culture precipitate is E-396 strain or a mutant thereof.

~~7. (withdrawn): A method for producing a pigment-containing substance for a feed additive, comprising removing moisture from a culture precipitate obtained from a pigment-producing microorganism wherein the carotenoid compound remains unextracted.~~

~~8. (withdrawn): The method of claim 7, wherein the pigment-containing substance is astaxanthin.~~

~~9. (withdrawn): The method of claim 7, wherein the culture precipitate comprises 16S ribosomal RNA having at least 98% homology with the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.~~

~~10. (withdrawn): The method of claim 7, wherein the culture precipitate comprises at least 3 mass % carotenoid compounds.~~

11. (currently amended): A pigment-containing cellular substance for inclusion as a feed additive produced by the method comprising:
culturing a microbe capable of producing carotenoid compounds;
centrifuging or filtering the microbial cells to remove the culture medium;
adding water to the cells;
suspending the cells in the water;
separating the water from the cells to remove dissolved medium ingredients; and

drying the cells so that at least 3% by mass of the dried microbial cells is carotenoid compounds ~~additives prepared by a process according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:~~

- ~~_____ a) adding water to the precipitate removed from the culture medium;~~
- ~~_____ b) suspending the precipitate; and~~
- ~~_____ c) separation of the precipitate to remove dissolved medium ingredients prior to the drying step.~~